



Frequently Asked Questions

CHLAMYDIA

What is CHLAMYDIA?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis* which can damage a woman's reproductive organs. Even though symptoms of chlamydia are usually mild or absent, serious complications that cause irreversible damage, including infertility, can occur "silently" before a woman ever recognizes a problem. Chlamydia also can cause discharge from the penis of an infected man.

How do people get chlamydia?

Chlamydia is transmitted during vaginal, anal or oral sex. Chlamydia can also be passed from an infected mother to her newborn during vaginal childbirth.

What are the signs and symptoms of chlamydia?

Chlamydia is known as a "silent" disease because three quarters of infected women and half of infected men have no symptoms. Women with symptoms might have an abnormal vaginal discharge or a burning sensation when urinating, low abdominal pain, low back pain, nausea, fever, pain during intercourse, or bleeding between menstrual periods. Men with signs or symptoms might have a discharge from their penis or a burning sensation when urinating. Men might also have burning and itching around the opening of the penis.

How is chlamydia diagnosed?

There are laboratory tests to diagnose chlamydia. Some can be performed on urine; other tests require that a specimen be collected from a site such as the penis or cervix.

How is chlamydia treated?

Chlamydia is easily treated and cured with antibiotics. Azithromycin and Doxycycline are the most commonly used treatments. All sex partners should be evaluated, tested and treated.

Who is at risk for chlamydia?

Sexually active men and women can be exposed to chlamydia during sexual contact with an infected person.



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What complications can result from untreated chlamydia?

In women, untreated infection can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can lead to chronic pelvic pain, infertility and ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the uterus).

In pregnant women, chlamydia infections may cause premature delivery. Babies born to infected mothers can get chlamydia infections in their eyes and respiratory tracts. Chlamydia is a leading cause of early infant pneumonia and conjunctivitis (pinkeye) in newborns.

How can chlamydia be prevented?

The surest way to avoid transmission of sexually transmitted diseases is to abstain from sexual contact, or to be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who was tested and is known to be uninfected. Latex or polyurethane male condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission of chlamydia.

For more information:

Call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at 1-800-232-4636, TTY: 1-888-232-6348 In English en Español.